

## **AGENDA**

### **SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**May 19, 2014**

**School Committee Member Ambrogi,  
Ald. Corriveau, Committee Member  
Connors, Ald. Shea, Committee  
Member Staub, Ald. Shaw**

**4:30 p.m.**

**Aldermanic Chambers  
City Hall (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor)**

1. The Clerk calls the meeting to order.
2. The Clerk calls the roll.
3. Discussion regarding the School District budget.
4. Discussion regarding the creation of a school facilities plan.
5. If there is no further business, a motion is in order to adjourn.

13. Establish the final program and services to be funded at the level approved by the Board of School Committee and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and set the budget in place.

**A.8.4:** Identify key budget and instructional personnel and require that curriculum budget areas be constructed based on the priorities for specific curriculum improvement plans. To facilitate sound decisions, each budget request should be linked to an evaluation of its past performance and expenditures. Require all staff members who submit budget requests to present an explanation of how dollar allocations will permit accomplishment of the goals, objectives, and priorities of the improvement plan in measurable term (see Findings 1.1, 4.1, and 5.1).

**A.8.5:** Require that administrators and teachers use student performance data, budget data, and curricular program evaluations to define current and desired service and program objectives.

**A.8.6:** After grouping and compiling all budgets within each program area, business department personnel should prepare a tentative curriculum budget for each school. The budgeted curricular areas, including costs, should be compiled into a worksheet with instructions for evaluating and ranking by the curriculum areas.

**A.8.7:** Give budgets to the appropriate central office administrators and all building administrative staff for evaluation and ranking. This process includes:

- Detailed hearings and justification by program administrators,
- Written explanation of the program evaluations, and
- Ranking by the administrators and staff based on alignment to district goals and evidence of cost-effectiveness.

**A.8.8:** Compile results with curriculum budget allocations ranked by priority and present them to the Board of School Committee and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen with a detailed cost-effectiveness evaluation in support of the recommendations.

**A.8.9:** Following budget adoption by the Board of School Committee and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, ensure through systematic monitoring that the budget staff works in concert with the program and evaluation staff to monitor program expenditures and effectiveness as measured by completion of objectives, overall goal performance, and the cost-benefit factors. Monthly reviews of expenditures and quarterly evaluation of progress on goals and objectives are reported to the building administrators, staff, and board for program modifications as warranted.

Given attention to these recommendations, the leadership of Manchester School District will be better able to establish tangible connections between organizational goals and expectations and the resource allocation process, resulting in an ongoing process of improved program outcomes and aligned budget allocations. This recommendation should be implemented in conjunction with the assessment recommendation (see Recommendation 5), which will provide information vital to the budget decision-making process. This recommendation may take several years to fully implement.

**Recommendation 9: Develop a comprehensive long-term facilities plan incorporating educational specifications in order to assure equitable facilities support to the district instructional program in all schools, fully functioning physical infrastructure, and safe and healthy building environments throughout the district.**

School systems and the communities they serve share the responsibility for providing schools that are safe, clean, well-maintained, and adequate in space and design to support the educational program. A comprehensive long-range facilities plan provides the administration and board with the information necessary for them to plan and maintain educational facilities to meet the needs of the community and the goals of the district and to allocate the financial resources necessary to support the facilities plan.

The district board and staff face significant challenges with regard to the school facilities (see Finding 5.3). The district continues to maintain 15- to 122-year-old schools, resulting in challenges such as inadequate and failing HVAC systems, water damage from roof leaks, safety code concerns, and other issues associated with the upkeep of aging facilities. Technology challenges include infrastructure issues at a time when technology

is becoming a major vehicle of instructional delivery (see [Finding 5.4](#)). Budget pressures have resulted in the extension of deferred maintenance schedules, leading to more frequent system failures.

The district is required to care for these facilities but neither owns them nor has the capacity to obtain long-term debt for major capital projects. Facilities maintenance and related costs amount to approximately six percent of the annual district budget. The district is clearly not exempted from new requirements from the various governmental agencies and must address these requirements with the same level of compliance as a district with state of the art facilities. In addition, the district is experiencing demographic changes such as a multi-year net reduction in student enrollment and a change in the instructional requirements of the incoming students. While elementary populations have remained somewhat stable for the past eight years, the high school population, which includes students from neighboring elementary districts, has been decreasing. Decisions by these districts to send their students elsewhere or build their own high school would accelerate this problem.

District and City of Manchester efforts to address these situations have ranged from major renovation projects, such as the Design-Built projects of over a decade ago, to a work-order system of repair. While systems of preventive maintenance are used in the district, they are not systematically applied. Instead, the district by default uses a deferred maintenance approach in which unfunded facilities needs are placed on a list and prioritized. Prioritized items then wait for funding availability. The priority list itself changes as particular items gain the attention of the district board and administration (see [Finding 1.4](#)).

The purpose of a comprehensive plan as recommended here is to represent a pre-established, predictable, and credible response to changing facility needs developed by a wide range of community stakeholders and endorsed by the major constituencies of the community.

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Manchester School District Board of School Committee:

**G.9.1:** Adopt a policy that requires the development of a comprehensive, long-range facilities and maintenance plan that includes the following elements:

- Ongoing demographic studies and population growth projections,
- Methods for monitoring facilities' conditions and maintenance needs,
- Standards for prioritizing renovations and replacement projects,
- Procedures for adjusting school boundaries and reconsidering school grade ranges in response to changing enrollment patterns,
- A comprehensive set of educational specifications for school construction and renovation that includes specific facilities provisions for disabled students, and
- Priorities for allocating funding for capital purposes and procedures for equitably implementing educational specifications in all schools.

**G.9.2:** Direct the superintendent to develop a comprehensive long-range facilities plan that addresses the criteria listed above and in [Exhibit 5.3.1](#).

**G.9.3:** Direct the superintendent to include a plan for preventative maintenance in the facilities plan. The maintenance plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Painting,
- Carpet cleaning and/or replacement,
- HVAC repair or replacement, and
- Roof repair or replacement.

**G.9.4:** Provide sufficient budgetary support for implementation of the facilities plan.

**G.9.5:** Direct the superintendent to provide periodic reports on facilities projects in progress and as planning occurs for subsequent phases of the facilities plan.

**Administrative Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Manchester School District Superintendent:

**A.9.1:** Prepare, for board consideration and adoption, a draft of a policy framework for a comprehensive long-term facility planning process.

**A.9.2:** Direct the development of the facilities plan by coordinating all facilities planning efforts, including the involvement of district personnel, parents, community members, and various community entities such as foundations, business and industry groups, and governmental agencies. Consolidate all elements of the plan, including existing components, such as revised education specifications, technology deployment, and accessibility requirements, into a single document.

Components of the plan should include the following:

- A philosophy statement that reviews the community aspirations and the educational mission and strategic goals in relation to the short- and long-term facilities goals;
- Enrollment data and school enrollment patterns (both current and projected) that take into account any known circumstances that may cause significant changes in the school age population over the next three to ten years, such as changes in local elementary districts' high school attendance patterns;
- A detailed description of the current organizational pattern of the schools (pattern of grade levels and programs by facility, such as described in the 2013 Restructuring Proposal) and the identification of possible organizational changes or alternatives that may be necessary to support the educational program in response to projected facilities demand;
- Identification of educational program needs, including the needs of the special education and English Language Learners population, and other factors that need to be considered by designers of capital projects, such as the design and construction of new schools, school renovations, building additions, or replacement of school facilities;
- An updated, detailed evaluation of each district facility, including those facilities providing support to the schools, so as to include an assessment of structural integrity, mechanical systems condition and efficiency, capacity for supporting open-ended technology deployment, energy efficiency, flexibility to support current instructional practices and student grouping strategies, space utilization, and conditions related to environmental health, safety, and security;
- Renovation and long-term maintenance schedules for each facility, including building age, dates of previous renovations or major maintenance projects, estimated costs of maintenance projects for budget purposes, number of students currently served, and total student capacity in terms of classroom space and infrastructure support;
- Prioritization of needs for renovation of existing facilities and a comprehensive process for determining the need for new facilities;
- Cost analysis to determine the fiscal viability of maintaining older facilities, including the cost of modifying them to meet the educational needs of the district's students and the identification of funding sources to carry out such projects; and
- Procedures for achieving greater involvement of all stakeholders in the development and ongoing evaluation of the facilities plan.

**A.9.3:** Assign the following responsibilities to the appropriate administrative staff:

- Overall review, enforcement, and revision of educational specifications documents;

- Coordination of all district planning efforts to assure that site level plans are coordinated with and integrated into the long-range facilities plan and that the latest enrollment scenarios/projections/school attendance patterns are also reflected in these plans;
- Development of a critical needs capital replacement schedule for all retained facilities to address major infrastructure components such as HVAC, plumbing, electrical systems, and security components;
- Coordination with campus leaders and local communities to implement an improved safety and security plan for schools, especially those employing portable or detached classrooms;
- Assessment and determination of appropriate and consistent standards for custodial and maintenance services, taking into consideration the age and condition of each facility, usage pattern, number of students and staff served by the facility, and facility square feet; and
- Development and communication of a consistently applied priority system for all maintenance work order requests based on highest priority for life and safety and protection of investment factors.

**Recommendation 10: Revise the table of organization to be consistent with sound organizational management principles. Ensure that all essential functions are included, especially those that support the design and delivery of a seamless educational program, assessment, and data management and analysis. Revise job descriptions to clearly outline current responsibilities and relationships within the district.**

Successful organizations have a table of organization and accompanying job descriptions that provide the structure and working parameters for a well organized, focused, and efficient administrative team. Quality control and productivity depend upon the clear communication of responsibilities and relationships within the organization.

The auditors found that the Manchester School District lacks adequate policies for managing the table of organization and related job descriptions (see Findings 1.1 and 1.3). The table of organization does not meet all the audit principles for sound organizational design (see Finding 1.3). The auditors' analysis revealed issues related to span of control, logical grouping of functions, scalar relationships, and full inclusion.

The organization and supervision of schools by separate levels (elementary, middle, and high school) does not support seamless curriculum and student services delivery, preschool through grade 12. Positions to fully support district-wide, data-based decision making and curriculum management functions are missing.

Most of the positions depicted on the table of organization have job descriptions. However, some of the job descriptions for key positions do not match the duties currently expected, such as for the use of data in decision making, curriculum management functions, and school improvement planning (see Findings 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.4, and 4.4).

**Governance Functions:** The following actions are recommended to the Manchester School District Board of School Committee:

**G.10.1:** Adopt a revised job description for the Superintendent of Schools that includes the responsibility for developing a table of organization that is reviewed annually and presented to the board.

**G.10.2:** Authorizes the superintendent to prepare and design a revised table of organization for effective administration (see Exhibit R.10.1).

**G.10.3:** Adopt a policy that states the expectation for up-to-date job descriptions for all employees that meet audit criteria. Require a review of job descriptions every two years to ensure that they are accurate, complete, and consistent with the table of organization (see Finding 1.3).

**G.10.4:** Direct the superintendent to align job descriptions and appraisal instruments for all employees.

**G.10.5:** Direct the superintendent to prepare annual reports to the Board of School Committee on the table of organization as it pertains to the following:

- Accuracy in depicting reporting relationships,